



Australian Bureau of Statistics

1301.0 - Year Book Australia, 1921

ARCHIVED ISSUE Released at 11:30 AM (CANBERRA TIME) 25/01/1920

This page was updated on 23 Nov 2012 to include the disclaimer below. No other content in this article was affected.

DISCLAIMER:

Users are warned that historic issues of this publication may contain language or views which, reflecting the authors' attitudes or that of the period in which the item was written, may be considered to be inappropriate or offensive today.

PRIVATE RAILWAYS

1. TOTAL MILEAGE OPEN, 1919-20

As has been stated in a previous part of this section (see A. 8) a number of private railway lines have from time to time been constructed in the Commonwealth. By far the greater proportion of such lines, however, has been laid down for the purpose of hauling timber, sugar-cane, coal, or other minerals, and is not generally used for the conveyance of passengers or for public traffic; in many cases the lines are often practically unballasted and are easily removable, running through bush and forest country in connexion with the timber and sugar-milling industries, and for conveying firewood for mining purposes. Private railways referred to herein include (a) lines open to the public for general passenger and goods traffic; and (b) branch lines from Government railways and other lines which are used for special purposes and which are of a permanent description. Other lines are referred to in the part of this section dealing with Tramways (see § 3, **Tramways**).

The following table gives particulars of private railways in the Commonwealth open for traffic for general and special purposes during 1919-20. A classification of these lines according to their gauge has already been given.

MILEAGE OF PRIVATE RAILWAYS OPEN, 1919-20.

Particulars	NSW Miles	Victoria Miles	Q'land Miles	S. Aust Miles	W. Aust Miles	Tas Miles	C'wealth Miles
For general traffic	189.32	24.94	278.68	33.8	278.35	162.86	976.95
For special purposes	172.35	45.71	982.91	15.95	575.5	48.69	1,841.11
Total	361.67	70.65	1261.59	49.75	853.85	211.55	2809.06

2. CLASSIFICATION OF PRIVATE RAILWAYS

In previous issues of the Year Book, a classification has been given shewing particulars of the private railways open for general traffic and for special purposes. On account of the necessity for economy of space, this classification has been omitted from this issue and has been transferred to the "Transportation Bulletin No. 12."

3. NEW SOUTH WALES

In this State the mileage of private railways open to the public for general traffic at the end of 1919 was 184.32, and of lines used for special purposes, 160.83 miles. Most of these lines were constructed primarily for the purpose of conveying coal from the mines to the Government railway systems. Particulars for the year 1919-20 of the operations of lines open for general traffic are given, so far as available, in the table on page 614.

(i) **Private Railways Open for General Traffic.** The most important of the lines open for general traffic are as follows: - **(a) The Deniliquin-Moama Line.** In 1874 permission was granted by the New South Wales Government to the Deniliquin and Moama Railway Company to construct a line forty-five miles long from Deniliquin in the Riverina district, to Moama, connecting with the Victorian Railway system at the Murray Bridge, near Echuca. The line was opened in 1876, the land required being granted by the Government. **(b) The Cockburn-Broken Hill Line.** This line is owned by the Silverton Tramway Company. It was opened in 1888, and connects Broken Hill with the South Australian railway system, having a total length of 36.67 miles. **(c) South Maitland Railways.** These lines, belonging to the South Maitland Railways, Limited, run from East Greta Junction, on the Northern line of the Government railways, to Stanford Merthyr, a distance of 7.36 miles, and from Aberdare Junction to Cessnock, 12.08 miles - a total of 19.44 miles. **(d) The New Redhead Coal Company's Railway.** The lines owned by this company branch from the Northern line of the Government railways, and run from Adamstown to Burwood Extended Colliery, thence to Belmont, and from Burwood Junction to Dudley Boundary and branches, a total distance of 12.00 miles. The lines are worked by the Railway Department, coal wagons being supplied in part by the coal companies using the line. The colliery companies using the line pay a way-leave for right to run their coal over the line, and the Railway Commissioners allow the New Redhead Company a proportion of the revenue from the passenger and goods traffic. **(e) The Seaham Coal Company's Railway.** This line runs from Cockle Creek to West Wallsend and Seaham Collieries, and has a total length of 5.13 miles. **(f) Hexham-Minmi Railway.** This line branches from the Northern line of the Government railways at Hexham, and has a length of 6.00 miles. **(g) The Commonwealth Oil Corporation's Railway.** This line runs from Newnes Junction on the Great Western line of the Government railways to the company's refinery, a distance of 33 miles. The Shay geared type of locomotive is in use on this line. **(h) The Warwick Farm Line** is a short line, 0.83 of a mile in length, connecting the Government line near Liverpool with the Warwick Farm Racecourse. Government rolling stock is used. **(i) The Goondah-Burrinjuck Line** is a line 26.25 miles in length, built and worked by the Public Works Department in connexion with the reservoir at Burrinjuck **(j) Liverpool - Holdsworth Line** is a line 5 miles in length, worked by the Railway Department, for which service a sum of £300 per annum is paid by the Defence Department.

In addition to the lines referred to above, legislative sanction was obtained in 1890 for the construction of a private line from the flux quarries at Tarrawingee to the Broken Hill line, a distance of 39.51 miles. The line was purchased by the Government in 1901, and is operated by the Silverton Tramway Company under lease from the Chief Commissioner, who pays the working expenses and receives the ordinary earnings and one-half the net receipts on special and holiday traffic. The mileage of this line is included in that of the Government railways, and it has a gauge of 3 feet 6 inches.

4. VICTORIA

In Victoria there are two private railways open for general traffic. **(a) Kerang-Koondrook tramway,** opened in 1889. The cost of construction of this line to the end of September, 1920, was £39,229, paid out of a loan advanced by the Victorian Government. The total length is 13.94 miles. The line is at present controlled by the Kerang Shire Council, but proposals have been made for its transfer to the Railway Department. **(b) Yarra Junction to Powelltown.** This line has a length of 11 miles, and is worked mainly for timber purposes.

A line running from Elsternwick to Oakleigh, a distance of about 5 miles, was constructed by a private company many years ago. It was never in general use, and has for some time been

dismantled.

5. QUEENSLAND

In this State private railways open for general traffic may be grouped under two heads: - (i) Lines constructed primarily for mining purposes or for the transport of sugar-cane, and (ii) Shire tramways.

(i) **Mining Railways.**(a) **The Chillagoe Railway.** The most important of these is the Chillagoe Railway, constructed under the Mareeba to Chillagoe Railway Act 1897, and opened in 1901. This line runs from Mareeba, on the Cairns railway, to Mungana, a distance of 102.73 miles. On 20th June, 1919, it was vested in the Queensland Railways Commissioner. (b) **The Stannary Hills Line.** This line branches from the Chillagoe railway at Boonmoo and runs to Rocky Bluff, via Stannary Hills, a total distance of 21 miles. The gradients on this line, which has a gauge of 2 feet, range as high as 1 in 27, while the radius of some of the curves is as low as 1.25 chains. An additional length of 8 miles has been surveyed with a view to extending the line.

(ii) **Shire Tramways.** Under Part XV. of the Local Authorities Act of 1902 provision is made whereby not less than one-third of the ratepayers in any district may petition the local authority to apply to the Governor for the constitution of a tramway area. The Governor may define the area and may also approve of the plans and specifications of the proposed tramway. The amount which may be advanced by the Government for the construction or purchase of a tramway may not exceed a sum equal to £5,000 for every mile of its length. As regards repayment of loans, no sum need be paid during the first three years, but after the expiration of that period the principal and interest must be repaid by half-yearly instalments on the basis provided for by the "Local Works Loans Act 1880 to 1899." For the purpose of raising the money to pay these instalments the local authority may levy a rate upon all ratable property within the tramway area. The money required for the tramway may be raised by the local authorities by the issue of debentures.

6. SOUTH AUSTRALIA

In this State a private railway open for general traffic is owned by the Broken Hill Proprietary Company, and runs from Iron Knob to the seaboard near the head of Spencer's Gulf, a distance of 33.80 miles. The line is utilized for the carriage of ore for use in connexion with the smelting works at Port Pirie and the steel works at Newcastle. There is also a line from Marion Bay, having a length of 5 miles, used for mining purposes.

7. WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Owing to the difficulty experienced at one time by the Government in constructing lines urgently required for the development of the country, private enterprise was encouraged to undertake the work of construction on the land-grant principle, and two trunk lines were thus constructed. The greater part of the private lines now open, however, have been constructed in connexion with the timber industry. (i) **The Midland Railway.** This line is 278.35 miles in length, and runs from Midland Junction, ten miles from Perth, to Walkaway, where it joins the Government line running to Geraldton. It was constructed under a concession of 12,000 acres of land per mile of line constructed, to be selected along the entire route of the railway. (ii) **The Great Southern Railway.** This line, which was built by private enterprise under the land-grant system, is 242 miles in length, and was acquired by the Government by purchase on the 1st January, 1897. The total price paid for all the interests of the private company and of the original concessionaire, was £1,100,000, which was divided by the Government for book-keeping purposes into £300,000 for the land and £800,000 for the railway. (iii) **Millar's Timber Trading Company's Lines.** These lines have been built chiefly under special timber concessions and leases. There were, at latest date available, in all eight lines situate in various parts of the State extending into the bush, whence logs are brought to the mills.

The total length of these lines was approximately 239.69 miles. (iv) **Other Lines**, There are also several other lines in various parts of the State used chiefly in connexion with the timber industry.

8. TASMANIA

In this State the three private lines open for general traffic are situated in the western part of the island.

(i) **The Emu Bay Railway Company**. The lines owned by this company run from Burnie to Waratah, from Guildford to Zeehan, and from Rayna to Dundas, and have a total length of 102.94 miles.

(ii) **The Mount Lyell Mining and Railway Company**. The Mount Lyell railway runs from Regatta Point, Strahan, to Queenstown, and the North Mount Lyell line from Kelly Basin to Linda. The former line, 22.13 miles in length, was constructed in 1895 - 6, while the latter line, 27.80 miles long, was taken over from the North Mount Lyell Copper Company on the amalgamation of the two companies in 1903. The line from Kelly Basin to Linda is now worked only intermittently.

(iii) **The Magnet Silver Mining Company's Railway**. This line runs from Magnet Junction, near Waratah, on the Emu Bay Company's line, to Magnet, a distance of 9.99 miles.

9. Operations of Private Railways 1919-20

The tabular statement given below shews particulars, so far as returns are available, for the year 1919-20, of all private railways open to the public for general traffic in the Commonwealth : -

PARTICULARS OF PRIVATE RAILWAYS OPEN FOR GENERAL TRAFFIC, 1919-20.

Line	Miles open (route) No.	Train Miles No.	Expenses						Rolling Stock		Tons of goods etc Tons	No. of Empl- etcoyees No.
			Capital Cost £	Gross Revenue £	Interest Working £	Interest etc £	Locos No.	Coaches No.	Passen- gers No.	Jour- neys No.		
NEW SOUTH WALES												
C'wealth Oil Corp'r'n	33	17,013	194,500,	6,115	8,615	(h)	4	(d)3	69	1,512	15,938	17
Deniliquin-Moama..	45	45,375	162,671	30,358	20,276	(h)	4	6	62	22,668	45,501	43
South Maitland	19.44	430,241	546,086	142,201	114,238	27,291	23	27	45	789,664	202,100	296
Goonh-Burrinj'k(a)	26.25	27,950	80,756	1,010	(i)9,420	(j)	4	3	28	2,896	3,461	29
Hexham-Minmi	6	1,968	1,000,000	200	352	(h)	1	1	..	243	600	4
New Redhead Co.	12	(h)	102,000	(h)	(h)	(h)	(c)	(c)	(c)	(h)	(h)	(c)
Seaham Colliery Co.	5.13	7,852	25,000	1,223	2,898	(h)	2	2	2	18,382	9,179	13
Silverton Tramway(l)	36.67	45,360	482,724	48,824	47,557	(h)	20	1	676	35,826	122,218	135
Liverp'l-Hdswthy(l)	5	1,688	35,354	(h)	(h)	(h)	(c)	(c)	(c)	(h)	(h)	(c)
Warwick Farm(l)	0.83	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)	(c)	(c)	(c)	(h)	(h)	(c)
Total (b)	189.32	577,447	2629,091	229,931	20,356	27,291	58	43	882	871,193	122,218	135
VICTORIA												
Kerang.K'ndrook (n)	13.94	17,778	39,229	6,001	4,194	1,426	3	2	9	18,350	25,680	17
Yarra J. - Powell't'n (n)	11	29,000	47,400	5,800	4,186	465	2	2	33	12,500	59,000	13
Total	24.94	46,778	86,629	11,801	8,380	1,891	5	4	42	30,850	84,680	30

QUEENSLAND												
Aramac-Barcaldine	41.5	15,212	86,739	13,911	7,386	4,256	2	2	2	5,719	11,877	15
Beaudesert(e)	33	(h)	93,559	12,337	10,651	..	1	3	1	14,090	11,585	27
Belmont Tramway	4.31	9,995	19,903	2,493	3,006	393	(c)	(c)	(c)	56,736	16,835	(c)
Buderim	7	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)
Irvinebank	14	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)
Douglas-Mossman	17.71	8,450	43,238	8,589	5,184	3,369	2	3	22	7,500	6,600	11
Invicta Mill	8.7	635	20,067	530	(h)	1,016	(c)	(c)	(c)	(h)	(h)	(c)
Lucinda Pt. to Stone R. and Lg. Pocket and Green Hills to Hampledon Junc.	54.88	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)	2	3	82	(h)	42,517	(h)
Macgregor(l)	22.13	3,328	66,328	1,610	2,057	1,213(k)	(c)	(c)	(c)	767	6,223	5
Mapleton	15	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)
Moreton Central S.M.	8.5	1,725	17,865	1,208	541	269	2	3	2	12,580	1,158	2
South Johnstone Central S.M. (l)	27.5	5,591	115,000	4,864	3,025	(h)	2	4	23	13,116	5,724	7
Stannary Him -. Tannymorell	21	16,159	64,320	4,031	5,675	(h)	2	2	76	1,916	12,439	8
Tram	3.45	2,237	(h)	296	148	(c)	(c)	(c)	(c)	1,022	3,668	c
Total(b)	278.68	63,287	527,019	49,869	37,673	10,516	13	20	208	113,446	118,626	75
SOUTH AUSTRALIA												
Iron Knob(b)	33.8	70,350	(h)	(h)	(h)	(h)	5	3	155	839	309,800	42
WESTERN AUSTRALIA												
Midland Railway(l)	278.35	269,611(f)	2,036,855	129,057	80,483	(h)	17	18	402	62,972	99,399	247
TASMANIA												
Emu Bay Railway(g)	102.94	105,801	613,137	67,845	40,701	21,656	9	6	155	30,348	51,662	169
Magnet Railway(l). - Mt. Lyell	9.99	3,640	18,750	331	1,675	(h)	2	1	6	886	425	8
Railway(n) Nth. Mt. Lyell	22.13	44,249	216,086	26,883	23,955	(h)	7	7	117	22,921	40,776	104
Rly(n)	27.8	8,470	316,638	4,394	8,086	(h)	4	4	56	3,620	13,034	20
Total (b)	162.86	162,160	1,164,611	99,453	74,417	21,656	22	18	334	57,775	105,897	301
Total for C'wealth(b)	967.95	1,216,653	6,444,205	520,111	404,309	61,354	120	106	202	31,137,075	1,117,399	1232

(a) The property of Commissioner of Water Conservation and Irrigation; for year ended 30th June, 1920. (b) Incomplete. (c) Worked by Government Railways. (d) Including one motor car. (e) For year ended 31st December, 1916. (f) For year ended 30th June, 1917. (g) Including 47.66 miles owned by the Emu Bay and Mount Bischoff Railway Company. (h) Not available. (i) Including interest. (j) Included in working expenses. (k) Rental of Permanent Way Material. (l) For year ended 30th June, 1920. (m) Exclusive of shipment coal. (n) For year ended 30th September, 1920.

10. Comparative Railway Statistics.-On page 566 **ante** a table is given shewing the railway facilities in 1919-20 in the States, in the Northern Territory, and in the Commonwealth, the railway mileage open for traffic being compared with both the area and population.

In the table below, comparative railway statistics of a like character are given in respect of the

principal countries of the world at certain dates. The dates have been so chosen as to bring into relation the latest accurate figures for both population and railway mileage.

COMPARATIVE RAILWAYS STATISTICS, VARIOUS COUNTRIES

Country	Year	Miles of Railway	Population	Area in Square Miles	Miles of Railway	
					Per 1,000 of population	Per 1,000 Sq.Miles of Territory
Europe						
United Kingdom	1919	23,725	47,000,700	121,633	0.5	195.05
Austria	1914	15,739	29,193,293	115,882	0.54	135.82
Belgium	1914	5,451	7,264,054	11,373	0.71	479.29
Denmark	1918	2,645	3,032,891	(c)15,042	0.87	175.84
France	1914	(a)31,958	39,601,509	207,054	0.81	154.35
Germany	1914	39,600	64,114,100	208,780	0.62	189.67
Greece	1914	1,365	4,821,300	41,933	0.28	32.55
Hungary	1914	13,589	21,134,862	125,609	0.64	108.18
Italy	1917	11,891	36,740,000	110,632	0.32	107.48
Netherlands	1918	2,113	6,778,699	12,582	0.31	167.94
Norway	1918	2,010	2,632,010	125,001	0.76	16.08
Portugal	1913	1,854	595,785	35,490	0.31	52.24
Russia	1916	48,955	149,884,230	1,997,309	0.33	24.51
Spain	1917	9,306	20,695,691	(b)190,050	0.45	48.99
Sweden	1917	9,303	5,813,850	173,035	1.6	53.76
Switzerland	1917	3,660	3,937,000	15,976	0.93	229.09
Asia						
India	1918	36,333	315,156,396	1,802,629	0.12	20.16
Russia	1913	10,586	29,141,320	6,641,587	0.36	1.59
Africa						
Egypt .	1917	(d)2,874	12,710,120	350,000	0.23	8.21
Union of South Africa	1918	10,021	6,986,687	473,096	1043	21.18
America, North -						
Canada	1917	38,604	8,835,000	3,729,665	4.37	10.35
Mexico	1914	15,840	15,501,684	767,798	1.02	20.65
United States of America	1916	26,6381	105,253,300	2,973,890	2.53	89.57
America, South						
Argentina	1918	21,880	8,284,266	153,119	2.64	18.97
Brazil	1917	17,477	30,492,275	3,275,510	0.57	5.34
Chile .	1918	5,611	3,945,538	289,829	1.42	19.36
Australasia						
Australia	1920	25,956	5,229,734	2,974,581	4.9	8.73
New Zealand	1920	3,134	1,257,405	104,751	2.49	29.92

(a) Including lines of "local" interest. (b) Exclusive of Balearic and Canary Islands. (c) Exclusive of Faroe Islands. (d) Exclusive of 1,500 miles in the Sudan.

It will be seen from the above table that per 1,000 of population the Commonwealth of Australia had the greatest mileage (in 1920), 4.90 miles; the next in magnitude being Canada (1917) with 4.37 miles, Argentina (1918) with 2.64 miles, the United States (1916) with 2.53 miles, and New Zealand (1920) with 2.49 miles.

The least mileage per 1,000 of population is shown in the case of India (1918) with 0.12 mile, followed by Egypt (1917) with 0.23 mile.

With regard to the mileage per 1,000 square miles of territory, Belgium (1914) with 479.29 miles was easily first, followed by Switzerland (in 1917) with 229.09 miles, the United Kingdom (in 1919) with 195.05 miles, Germany (in 1914) with 189.67 miles, and Denmark (in 1918) with 175.84 miles.

The least mileage open per 1,000 square miles is that of Asiatic Russia (in 1913) with 1.59 miles, the next being 5.34 miles in the case of Brazil (1917).

3. Tramways

1. General. - Tramway systems are in operation in all the States of the Commonwealth, and in recent years considerable progress has been made in the adoption of electrical traction, the benefit of which is now enjoyed by a number of the principal towns of the Commonwealth.

In many parts of Australia private lines used for special purposes in connexion with the timber, mining, sugar, or other industries are often called tramways, but they are really private railways, and the traffic on them has nothing in common with that of the street tramways for the conveyance passengers, which are dealt with in the present section.

(i) **Total Mileage Open and Classification of Lines.** The following tables shew the total mileage of tramway lines open for general passenger traffic in each State and in the Commonwealth for the year 1919-20, and also in the Commonwealth as a whole for the years 1910-11 to 1919-20, classified **(a)** according to the motive power utilised, **(b)** according to the nature of the authority by which the lines are controlled and **(c)** according to gauge :-

TRAMWAYS. - CLASSIFICATION OF MILEAGE OPEN FOR PASSENGER TRAFFIC IN EACH STATE AND IN THE COMMONWEALTH, 1919-20.

	New South Wales Miles	Victoria Miles	Queensland Miles	South Australia Miles	Western Australia Miles	Tasmania Miles	C'wealth Miles
ACCORDING TO MOTIVE POWER							
Electric	155.35	105.26	42.6	66.03	50.66	23.13	443.03
Steam	73.96	1.15	6.00	..	17.75.	34.05	132.89
Cable	..	45.90	..	..	..	..	45.90
Horse	..	0.63	..	(a)17.36	7.16	7.60	32.75
Total		152.94	48.6	83.39	75.57	64.76	654.57
ACCORDING TO CONTROLLING AUTHORITY							
Government	225.81	118.13	..	17.36	52.16	27.13	440.59
Municipal	..	..	6	66.03	8.66	23.13	103.82
Private	3.5	34.81	42.6	..	14.75	14.5	110.16
Total	229.31	152.94	48.6	83.39	75.57	64.76	654.57
ACCORDING TO GAUGE							
Gauge							
5ft.3in	..	5.16	..	7.35	..	..	12.51
4ft.8in	229.31	146.63	42.6	66.03	..	..	484.57
3ft.6in	..	1.15	6	10.01	58.66	50.26	126.08
2ft.0in	..	..	..	..	16.91	14.5	31.41
Total	229.31	152.94	48.6	83.39	75.57	64.76	654.57

(a) 16,38 miles included in South Australian Government railway mileage.

This page last updated 23 November 2012

© Commonwealth of Australia

All data and other material produced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) constitutes Commonwealth copyright administered by the ABS. The ABS reserves the right to set out the terms and conditions for the use of such material. Unless otherwise noted, all material on this website – except the ABS logo, the Commonwealth Coat of Arms, and any material protected by a trade mark – is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 2.5 Australia licence